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Committee for Development Policy

Report on the fifteenth session

(18-22 March 2013)

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Summary

The present report contains the main findings and recommendations of the Committee for Development Policy at its fifteenth session. The Committee addressed the following themes: the role of science, technology and innovation in achieving sustainable development, as its contribution to the discussions at the 2013 annual ministerial review on the theme "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals"; the vulnerabilities and development needs of the small island developing States; emerging issues in international development in the post-2015 era; issues relating to the least developed countries, including the guidelines regarding their smooth transition from the category of least developed countries and monitoring the development progress of Samoa.

In its analysis of science, technology and innovation, the Committee noted that advancing a nation's capacity in science, technology and innovation and its effective application in economic activities are indispensable to sustainable and inclusive development. To address the threats that climate change poses to sustainability, equal attention should be paid to technologies needed for mitigation and adaptation. At the same time, science, technology and innovation and related policies need to be placed in a broader context that takes into account the institutional, cultural and historical dimensions within which science, technology and innovation operate. Governments have a fundamental role to play in building science, technology and innovation capabilities through education, funding of research and the promotion of innovation, including through effective sectoral policies. This requires changes in current international trade and investment regimes so as to provide national Governments with adequate policy space to undertake appropriate policies and measures. It is also imperative to understand that technological choices can have negative impacts and externalities on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Technological choices also have important distributional effects. A comprehensive approach is thus required. Scientific knowledge and technologies required to meet basic human needs and environmental challenges should be regarded as global public goods. Accordingly, a more adequate system of incentives for the promotion and dissemination of these technologies is needed to make them widely available.

The Committee also considered the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States and possible policy responses, focusing on how to further the full and effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. International support for the sustainable development of small island developing States has been on the international policy agenda for a long time, but the challenges faced by these States are intensifying, as evidenced by the mounting threats associated with climate change, the negative impacts of the recent global economic and financial crisis, and more structurally, for some of them, the intensification of existing vulnerabilities owing to increased globalization. Stabilizing global economic and financial markets and international measures to minimize the extent and impact of climate change is indispensable to the sustainable development of small island developing States. Existing measures to support climate change adaptation in these States also needs to be scaled up.

As a follow-up to its work programme, the Committee continued to consider how the United Nations development agenda could proceed in the post-2015 era. Noticeable emerging trends in the global economy include increasing heterogeneity of developing countries; a transition to a multipolar world; and persistent global and rising domestic inequalities. Urgent action is needed to move from the articulation of global goals to the implementation of policies and strategies for the realization of those goals. The new development approach should be universal. International cooperation post-2015 will need to deliver more effectively on three basic objectives: (a) managing the growing interdependence of countries; (b) promoting universally agreed social and environmental standards; and (c) reducing the large inequalities in countries' levels of economic development. New thinking coupled with institutional reforms is needed to improve global governance so as to achieve more equitable distribution of opportunities among countries and people within countries; a more efficient provision of global public goods; and a reduction in human, environmental and financial risks.

Regarding least developed countries, the Committee proposed refinements to the reporting procedures of graduating and graduated countries and of the Committee itself in the light of the new General Assembly resolution (67/221) on the smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries. The refinements are intended to enhance and facilitate reporting on the preparation and implementation of smooth transition strategies. The Committee noted the sustained positive development progress of Samoa, which is scheduled to graduate in January 2014.

[15 April 2013]

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Matters calling for action by the Council

Emerging issues in international development in the post-2015 era

1. The Committee for Development Policy considered how the United Nations development agenda should proceed in the post-2015 era. In this regard, it recommends that, in its deliberations on the post-2015 framework, the Economic and Social Council consider taking a broader approach, focusing not just on goals but also on the policies and strategies for sustainable development worldwide, in all of its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental). In this task, particular attention should be paid to rising domestic inequalities and the persistence of high levels of abject poverty, two of the most adverse trends the world has experienced in recent decades. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the Council incorporate the reduction of inequality as a specific goal, with measureable targets, in its deliberation on the post-2015 agenda. In addition, in considering the post-2015 development agenda, the international community should be fully respectful of national priorities and strategies and should guarantee adequate policy space at the national level through appropriate changes in global governance.

2. It is further recommended that, in defining universal policies for the post-2015 era, the Council take into account three basic objectives of international cooperation: (a) managing the growing interdependence of countries; (b) promoting social and environmental standards already adopted by the international community (economic, social and cultural rights, associated conventions, and access to basic social services for all); and (c) reducing the large inequalities that remain in the levels of economic development among countries, particularly between advanced and least developed countries. These tasks should be undertaken bearing in mind two emerging features of the global economy: (a) the transition to a multipolar world; and (b) the increasing heterogeneity of developing countries. Both require reconsideration of how to effectively operationalize the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States

3. As requested by the Council in its resolution 2011/44 on the review of the United Nations support for small island developing States, the Committee considered how to further the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The Committee noted that the urgency of implementing the Programme of Action and the Strategy has been heightened as a result of the growing threats posed by climate change and the observed negative impact on small island developing States of the 2008/09 global financial and economic crisis. The Committee recommends that the Council give consideration to the merits of creating a small island developing States category, defined by appropriate criteria, based on the specific vulnerabilities experienced by this group of countries. The Committee recommends that support measures for any group of countries be differentiated according to the specific vulnerabilities they face.

Guidelines regarding the smooth transition from the category of least developed countries

4. The Committee welcomes the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/221 on a smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries, in particular the decision by the Assembly to take note of the decisions of the Council on the inclusion of countries in that list and the graduation of countries from the category of least developed countries at its first session of the Assembly following the adoption of such decisions by the Council. In this context, the Committee proposes a number of refinements to the process by which graduating and graduated countries report on the preparation and implementation of their smooth transition strategy. The Committee requests the Council to endorse these refinements as a further clarification of the framework set out by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/221 and in earlier resolutions relating to the smooth transition from the category, in particular General Assembly resolution 59/209.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development

5. Science, technology and innovation are essential drivers of sustainable and inclusive development. It is therefore crucial that science, technology and innovation initiatives address all aspects of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental — and their interrelationships, since technological choices can have negative impacts on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It is equally important that knowledge systems be constructed broadly to include the cultural, social and institutional dimensions in which they operate.

6. The role of government in building science, technology and innovation capabilities is fundamental, including in stimulating the development of systems that will foster the acquisition, development and dissemination of knowledge at the national level. This includes the promotion of education, research, development and technological dissemination, as well as the design and implementation of nationally appropriate industrial policies. Moreover, the international community should review the extent to which the international trade and investment regimes can guarantee adequate policy space for national Governments in this area. In particular, the limitations imposed by the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) should be recognized, especially the restrictions on the use of policy instruments such as domestic content, export performance and standards for government procurement that have been widely used by developed countries and successful industrializers in the developing world.

7. The current system of promoting research and development, including associated intellectual property rights, leads to underinvestment in social priorities and restricts access to the benefits of innovation. Alternative modalities for supporting and financing global research and innovation merit serious consideration. Knowledge, research and technologies that have a direct bearing on the fulfilment of basic human needs and on small rural producers and that tackle environmental challenges, in particular those relating to climate change, should be freely accessible

to all as global public goods. A major challenge for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development will be climate change adaptation, especially in the most vulnerable communities and countries. To this end, emphasis should be placed on the creation of an improved knowledge base for the understanding of climate change dynamics and of the technologies and innovations needed to respond to them.

Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States

8. The Committee noted that action on climate change, including a meaningful outcome to global negotiations on a new climate change treaty and on enhancing global macroeconomic stability is of particular interest to small island developing States. It is essential to provide international support to these States to help them adapt to environmental shocks arising from negative global impacts; this includes support for the resettlement costs of involuntary migrants from small island developing States affected by climate change. An effective monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy needs to be established, building as appropriate on existing national and regional mechanisms, to ensure adequate and timely analysis of the adequacy and effectiveness of such implementation.

Monitoring the development progress of graduating countries

9. The Committee reviewed the development progress of Samoa and noted the country's continued economic and social progress, based on the findings from the recent trends in the indicators used for identification of least developed countries. It encourages Samoa, with the assistance of its development partners, to prepare a transition strategy for its graduation from the category, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/221.

Chapter II
Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development

A. Introduction

10. Science, technology and innovation play a critical role in achieving sustainable development goals, including with respect to enhancing productivity and inducing a dynamic transformation of the economy, increasing growth rates and the number of decent jobs while reducing fossil-based energy consumption, developing essential drugs and improving health/medical care, achieving food security through sustainable agricultural methods and raising agricultural productivity, reducing the drudgery and improving the safety of housework, and increasing the safety of reproduction. Advancing a nation's capacity in science, technology and innovation and its effective application in economic activities are essential factors for expanding peoples' capabilities and achieving sustainable development. At the same time, science, technology and innovation form part of global and national capabilities to address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development and their interactions.

11. While science, technology and innovation are essential in finding answers to the sustainability crisis that the world is currently facing, there is a need to look at the broader context and take into account both the cultural and historical dimensions in which science, technology and innovation operate. Under this framework, it is crucial to recognize that although the world is confronting common crises, there are differences within and between countries; hence, knowledge systems should be constructed broadly to include the diverse historical, cultural, social and institutional features of countries.

12. In this regard, the contributions of science, technology and innovation to a new sustainable development paradigm require a deep understanding of the relation among the three pillars of sustainable development, acknowledging that environmental degradation harms economic development and human well-being, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups in society. Social and economic sciences must contribute as much as natural and technical sciences to an approach where improved quality of life and sustainable patterns of consumption and production can be reconciled with reduced environmental degradation, poverty and inequalities, and the promotion of peace and security.

13. Similarly, it is imperative to understand that there are technological choices that can have negative impacts (externalities) on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. They also have important distributional consequences besides generating "winners" and "losers" owing to the introduction of new production processes and labour-saving technologies. Important distributional implications emerge particularly owing to decisions about which types of knowledge and innovations are promoted and developed and which types are neglected and forgotten. Thus, it remains important to be clear about the fact that the choices we face are societal choices, not scientific or technical ones. Understanding this approach, science, technology and innovation for sustainable development offers immense opportunities to connect science with society, culture and traditional knowledge.

B. Science, technology and innovation: meeting basic human needs and environmental challenges

14. The science, technology and innovation capabilities of a nation are basic, yet crucial, factors not only for sustained economic growth, but also for a nation's ability to provide its citizens with quality education, good health care and safe food and to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

15. Since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, there have been renewed efforts to use science, technology and innovation, nationally and globally, for the development of vaccines and improved medical treatments for tropical diseases and other diseases that plague the developing world, as well as for global pandemics such as HIV/AIDS. [1] Technological innovation has played an equally critical role in the management of safe freshwater resources and in addressing concerns about water scarcity in agricultural production by small farmers. International research institutions, supported by public funds, have been active in agricultural innovation in developing countries in the past, leading to the green revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. National Governments expanded roads, irrigation systems and electrical power supply to support farmers to adopt the new technology. International lending was also prioritized for agricultural development. [2] More recently, an innovative system, known as the rice intensification system, has been successfully tested in 40 countries. [3] Nonetheless, these efforts remain limited. Moreover, in many instances, access to technology and innovation remains restricted in view of the proprietary nature of intellectual rights.

16. Geography matters in climate change, and some regions will be more affected than others. The economic, social and environmental consequences will also vary, depending on levels of development in general and on individual, local and national preparedness to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change.

17. A major challenge for science, technology and innovation in climate change is to support mitigation and adaptation. While much attention has been paid to mitigation, particularly because greenhouse gas emissions are largely generated in the more technologically advanced countries, little or no attention has been paid to the promotion and development of science, technology and innovation for adaptation. Most of the adaptation technologies currently available reflect informal or spontaneous processes, such as indigenous or traditional knowledge-based technologies used to cope with flooding and irrigation systems developed and updated to make more efficient use of scarce water. Adaptation measures are likely to be more amenable to small-scale interventions and thus more adaptable to local conditions and institutions. However, adaptation measures are likely to be more accessible to richer countries, communities and individuals, which are not necessarily the most vulnerable.

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 13* (E/2009/33).

[2] The green revolution has been criticized based on the technology it promoted, which involves intensive use of fertilizers, chemical pesticides and water; these have negative environmental impacts.

[3] Rice has been the single most important staple of the poor, particularly in Asia and parts of Africa.

Science, technology and innovation as global public goods

18. The above-mentioned considerations reinforce the need to view certain technologies, particularly those that contribute to meeting basic human needs and environmental challenges, as global public goods that deserve to be supported by a system of incentives to make them accessible to all. The development and dissemination of these technologies should be a global priority. However, both confront major obstacles.

19. First, with respect to development, markets have not been efficient in providing these goods and services in the right quantity and quality in a timely manner. The current system of financing research and development depends largely on granting exclusive intellectual property rights as an incentive for private investment in the generation of technology and innovation. This leads to underinvestment in innovations for social priorities, notably to meet basic human needs and environmental sustainability. Therefore, alternative mechanisms for financing innovation are needed, such as prizes and public funds (including public funds to buy technologies that would then be made freely accessible), and deserve further consideration.

20. Second, with respect to dissemination, technologies receiving patent protection are often less accessible owing to monopoly pricing, which makes them more costly. However, a defining aspect of global public goods is that they should be non-exclusive; once the knowledge or technologies are created in these crucial areas, no one should be excluded from the access to them. The question is how to secure sustainable funding to provide them. Because of their non-exclusive nature, research and development in such technologies has long been underfunded, in particular with respect to those needed by poor people living in low-income countries.

C. Building science, technology and innovation capabilities for sustained growth: the role of Government

21. Development is, in essence, a process of capacity-building. Developing countries confront many obstacles in building a robust and entrepreneurially dynamic private sector; however, they also have some advantages. They can draw on the knowledge accumulated elsewhere, obviating the need to devote significant resources to research and development. Developing countries use a given technology only after it becomes an industrial standard, which also implies that they can adapt these existing mature technologies. This is known as the "latecomer effect".[4] However, latecomers also need to acquire new or emerging technologies, which are often associated with dynamic markets. Emerging technological paradigms can serve as a window of opportunity for latecomers because they are not necessarily locked into the "old" or "mature" technological paradigm and thus are able to make best use of new opportunities in the emerging or new industries.

22. However, developing countries often go through technological learning and capability development before reaching the stage where they can fully benefit from the latecomer effects. Public and/or private entities need to build a stock of knowledge in the form of human and physical capital, identify the technologies and

[4] Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1962).

industries in which the country or firm has the larger growth potential and channel the resources into them, while acknowledging the risks of failing to plan.

23. Governments thus have a fundamental role to play in building science, technology and innovation capabilities, including in stimulating the development of systems that foster the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, as well as in designing and implementing industrial policies. Evidence suggests that the level of expenditure on research and development is key to building up innovation capacities. Meanwhile, a country's institutions, educational system and quality of education are significant factors in achieving the transition from the low-income to the middle-income level. In this regard, it should be noted that tertiary education and retraining and facilitating the mobility of researchers are necessary to enhance the transfer of technology among different sectors of the economy and the application of such technology in business activities.

24. Moreover, building technological capacities requires Government support. When private capacity is non-existent or weak, the public sector as a whole needs to lead the design and implementation of a new industry or a new technology, with a combination of horizontal interventions at the macroeconomic level. As the capacity of the private sector advances, the direct involvement of the national Government may become less prominent, its policies are likely to be more targeted to specific industries or technologies, and the nature of public and private cooperation takes the form of partnership. Ultimately, the private sector may become fairly independent from the public sector in technological development, with the latter providing the former with economic incentives, including exclusive property rights for a certain period, to encourage its efforts. Nonetheless, it should be recognized that even in developed countries, Governments continue to conduct and sponsor a significant amount of research and technological development, and not only in defence-related matters.

D. Importance of policy space for science, technology and innovation

25. A pertinent question is whether the current international trade and investment regimes guarantee enough policy space for the Governments of developing countries to promote national science, technology and innovation capabilities.

26. Among the relevant multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements, the TRIPS and TRIMs Agreements should both be mentioned. The TRIPS Agreement establishes minimum standards for domestic intellectual property protection with which signatory countries (excluding least developed countries) are required to comply. This has significant implications for permissible science, technology and innovation policies at the national level. In this regard, certain measures that developed countries used in the course of their industrialization, namely, discrimination against foreign patent application, or exclusion of such industries as chemicals and pharmaceuticals, are no longer available. However, the TRIPS Agreement contains several "flexibilities" that can be used by developing countries in designing their own intellectual property rights system. Meanwhile, the TRIMs Agreement prohibits practices such as local content requirements manufacturing requirements, export performance, trade balancing requirements and technology transfer requirements. Simply put, these measures significantly limit policy space for Governments in developing countries. Beyond this issue, there is the question of

whether the TRIPS rules are the right intellectual property rights model for developing countries and what implications they bring in terms of access to knowledge and technology.

27. There is a need for a global dialogue on the reform of international trade and investment regimes. In particular, intellectual property right systems need to evolve from a focus on protection to one that fosters dissemination. Stringent protection of intellectual property rights, particularly patents, can be a serious deterrent in countries' efforts to achieve sustainable development in general and to pursue appropriate industrial policies to that effect. In this regard, the international community should also consider several policy issues, including a broad research exemption for experimental users and judicial power to require non-exclusive licensing in the spirit of public interest. Moreover, there is a need to install a minimum safeguard of public interests by ensuring transparency in licensing and allowing wider use of non-exclusive licensing, particularly in the patenting of results of publicly funded research.

Chapter III
Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States

A. Introduction

28. In its resolution 2011/44, adopted on 5 December 2011, the Economic and Social Council requested the Committee for Development Policy to submit its independent views and perspectives on how to further the full and effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, including by refocusing efforts towards a results-oriented approach and considering what improved and additional measures might be needed to more effectively address the unique and particular vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States.

29. The Committee considered the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States, building upon its previous review on United Nations support to such States, prepared in 2010 at the Council's request.[5] Its analysis reconfirms that the intrinsic vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States are related to their smallness, isolation and fragmentation, narrow resource and export base, exposure to environmental and natural shocks (including climate change and natural disasters), and exposure to external economic shocks.[6]

30. Whereas most of these structural constraints also pose challenges for many non-island developing countries, small island developing States are typically particularly vulnerable since a higher share of the population is negatively affected by shocks compared with other developing economies. In addition, a number of small island developing States composed of low-lying atolls could face an existential risk of becoming uninhabitable owing to climate change impacts, in particular a rise in sea level. In this regard, the Committee emphasizes that challenges faced by small island developing States continue to intensify, as evidenced by the mounting threats associated with climate change, the negative impacts of the recent global economic and financial crisis on many such States and the heightened competitive challenges owing to increased globalization. These persistent and increasing challenges highlight the structural nature of the vulnerabilities of small island developing States as well as the lack of effective response measures.

B. Scaling up support measures

31. Both the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy initiatives include a wide range of international support measures to support action at the national level to address the vulnerability and development needs of small island developing States. In addition, there are several instruments, conventions, agreements and strategies that also tackle challenges directly related to the

[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 13* (E/2010/33), chap. V.

[6] Matthias Bruckner, "Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States", *Committee for Development Policy Background Paper*, No. 17, available from www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/cdp_bg_papers.shtml.

vulnerabilities of these States, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Hyogo Framework for Action and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. However, there is an urgent need for scaled-up international measures, in some instances, substantially. This is particularly true with respect to climate change adaptation in small island developing States, since these countries contribute the least to the problem yet some will be among those that suffer most from the consequences. Implementation of adaptation programmes and projects is still at an early or pilot stage and it is not clear whether adequate resources are being provided. The Committee also highlights the responsibility of the international community to finance climate change adaptation in small island developing States, since the contribution of these countries to the global problem is negligible.

32. Disaster risk reduction and sustainable resource management also require scaled-up support. While regional and international disaster risk insurance schemes can play an important role, they need to be embedded in comprehensive disaster risk reduction strategies. Existing mechanisms such as the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility could be enhanced by covering broader economic damage, in particular damage endured by the poor, and not only damage to Government property. Additionally, the piloted new mechanisms in the Pacific urgently need to be implemented. International support is needed to set up disaster insurance mechanisms and to subsidize the cost of insurance policies for poorer small island developing States.

33. Increased support is also needed to address the high costs of providing goods and administrative services in small island developing States. These high costs are associated with very small populations and the resulting absence of economies of scale as well as geographic dispersion in the case of archipelagic small island developing States. Where feasible, the joint provision of public goods on a regional basis could be expanded and supported internationally. Positive results have been achieved in areas such as tertiary education, monetary policy or fisheries management, while additional measures need to be explored in certain areas such as the provision of transport services to remote islands.

34. Whereas economic diversification is important to address risks that arise from a small export base, the structurally limited production base of small island developing States constrains the effectiveness of such measures. Since lack of export diversification heightens exposure to economic shocks, there is a need to strengthen (official and market-based) contingent financing mechanisms that such States can utilize in response. However, the high levels of indebtedness of many small island developing States limit their access to international capital markets. Hence, there is also a need to address the problematic debt in affected countries.

35. In many small island developing States, migration is a common response to external shocks, particularly in smaller ones where the whole country can be affected. Major destination countries could further facilitate the temporary mobility of labour from affected countries in the aftermath of severe shocks. Linking unilateral, bilateral and regional measures in this regard to a global migration framework could further enhance the realization of benefits and limit the costs associated with migration.

C. Reducing global shocks

36. Environmental, economic and financial shocks are external events from the perspective of small island developing States and pose development constraints for all countries. The special vulnerabilities of small island developing States, however, make them particularly dependent on effective international responses aimed at tackling the causes of such shocks.

37. The world is not on track to achieve the internationally agreed goal of limiting the global temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius compared to the temperature in pre-industrial times, but even this agreed limit is expected to lead to detrimental development consequences in small island developing States. Adaptation measures in these States are critical to limit negative impacts, but will not suffice to completely mitigate the negative consequences of climate change. Furthermore, adaptation measures reduce the resources otherwise available for the sustainable development of small island developing States. A global treaty that ensures that global carbon emissions peak in the near future and later massively decline and that guarantees a fair and equitable distribution of responsibilities and costs is needed.[7] Its implementation will require a transformation of socioeconomic development paradigms, since purely technological fixes will not be sufficient.

38. For most small island developing States, ocean ecosystems are critical for food security, employment and tourism but are increasingly threatened. Sustainable management practices at the national and regional levels need to be supported, including the development and implementation of appropriate fishing licensing regimes and the establishment and enforcement of marine-protected areas. However, additional international measures are needed to reduce threats from global overfishing, stop unsustainable fishing practices, prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries, reduce global capacity in the fisheries sector, including through subsidy reforms, and ensure a fair distribution of benefits of international fishing licences.

39. The 2008/2009 economic and financial crisis demonstrated the vulnerability of small island developing States to a sudden decline in global aggregate demand. Many, although not all, have been hit harder by the crisis than most other developing countries. Generally, the strong and lasting negative impact from the crisis is owing to their high exposure to trade shocks, their export concentration in developed country markets and their limited scope for domestic countercyclical stabilization policies. Hence, international stabilization of economic and financial systems would play a major role in reducing the vulnerability of small island developing States. Improved regulation of international and financial markets, an increased countercyclical orientation of macroeconomic policies in major markets and improved international coordination would be important.

40. The world food and energy price crisis also highlighted the vulnerability of many small island developing States associated with high import dependency. Stabilizing and ensuring the affordability of global food prices would make important contributions to reducing the food insecurity of these States. Whereas controlling volatility in global energy markets (particularly oil markets) could also

[7] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2007, Supplement No. 13* (E/2007/33), chap. II and *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 13* (E/2010/33), chap. VI.

play a role in reducing the vulnerability of small island developing States, moving towards renewable energy systems in these States is an even more effective approach to addressing their vulnerabilities.

41. In sum, without robust global measures by the international community, the vulnerability of small island developing States cannot be effectively addressed. Increasing resilience and reducing exposure will not be sufficient and may not be effective in reducing vulnerabilities if the sources of shocks are not tackled as well. These response measures must be seen in the overall context of sustainable development as well as the development needs of all developing countries in order to ensure the coherence of the global support system.

D. Implications of the heterogeneity of small island developing States

42. A wide range of appropriate indicators reveals that small island developing States are indeed, on average, more vulnerable than other developing countries, whereas the higher per capita income and higher human capital make them more resilient to shocks in general. However, looking at averages masks the important heterogeneity among small island developing States and non-small island developing States. There are highly vulnerable non-small island developing States as well as only moderately vulnerable small island developing States. Moreover, vulnerability rankings vary across indicators. Overall, the heterogeneity of small island developing States is smaller within regional groupings such as the Caribbean or the Pacific Islands, whereas there is more regional diversity among these in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region. At the same time, even intraregional heterogeneity is substantial and, in some areas, there is noticeable similarity across regions.

43. The heterogeneity of small island developing States has implications for the optimal design of and access to response measures, if these are to be effective and efficient. The creation of a small island developing States category based on appropriate criteria measuring specific vulnerabilities is an option that warrants further consideration by the Council, which should include differentiating the support to small island developing States according to the kind of specific vulnerabilities they face. A differentiated approach to international support could also depoliticize some of the controversies surrounding the creation and composition of a formal small island developing States category.

E. Global monitoring mechanism

44. The establishment of a robust global monitoring system could help to strengthen accountability and ensure adequate and timely analysis of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The upcoming international conference on small island developing States, to be held in Samoa in 2014, will provide an opportunity to agree on the principles and an implementation plan for the system. The monitoring framework should be based on existing regional and national monitoring frameworks. At the same time, it should also fully utilize readily available international data on vulnerabilities, development needs and policy responses relevant for small island developing States, including the

relevant indicators used in the economic vulnerability index developed by the Committee for Development Policy.

45. A comprehensive monitoring system could be instrumental for an evaluation of the whole set of response measures, taking into account the interlinkages between policies. The creation of feedback instruments in respect of national, regional and international policymaking could lead to the design of better-integrated response measures. The system should also facilitate the exchange of experiences and include capacity-building activities for the generation and interpretation of statistical information.

46. Whereas the adoption of concrete policy recommendations, targets and milestones on the sustainable development of small island developing States would facilitate the development of a monitoring framework, the latter could add value even on the basis of existing national, regional and international targets. In order to improve data availability, regional cooperation could complement national efforts. International agencies should allocate sufficient resources to include all small island developing States in their data collection and estimation activities. Adequate resources need to be provided for the global monitoring system.

Chapter IV
Strengthening international cooperation for the post-2015 era

A. Introduction

47. As 2015 nears and the international community considers new approaches to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals by the agreed date, attention is increasingly focused on the conceptualization of the global development agenda beyond 2015. In 2011, the Committee for Development Policy initiated a research programme to contribute to the discussions on the formulation of that agenda.[8] In its deliberations, the Committee also underlined the need for the international community to firmly re-engage in the other (unfinished) agendas adopted at the various United Nations summits and global conferences of the past 15 years, which set out principles, commitments and goals beyond those expressed in the Millennium Development Goal framework.

48. However, this will not be enough. The Committee also stressed the urgency of moving from global goals to policies and strategies that allow for the realization of those goals and, in particular, of enabling the adoption of comprehensive sustainable development strategies that address all three of its dimensions (economic, social and environmental). Hence, there is a need for development models that promote economic growth that is socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable and tackle the various crises affecting the global economy, namely, economic and financial crises and their impacts, the food security crisis, the emerging climate change crisis and persistently high inequalities. In this regard, the method of measuring progress needs to move away from gross domestic product (GDP) to measures that capture additional factors such as the distribution of income, the environmental costs and associated depreciation of natural capital, and the adverse effects on human capital generated by, inter alia, malnutrition, preventable ill health and atrophy of skills generated by unemployment.

B. Alternative development strategies

49. The development model underlying the Millennium Development Goals has not worked as intended and needs to be reconsidered both at the country and the international levels. While there is no single recipe for promoting broad-based growth with job creation and guaranteeing social and environmental sustainability, the Committee's analysis points to the following ingredients: greater reliance on domestic resource mobilization and savings; equitable growth, including through investment in human capital; the adoption of sectoral policies that are compatible with open economies; the promotion of sustainable agriculture; low-carbon energy policies; and macroeconomic policies that promote stability and equity.

50. Historical experience and research suggest that the most significant reductions in poverty and the attainment of a wide range of social objectives are best served by policies that ensure universal access to quality social services for all, which may be

[8] See *The United Nations Development Strategy Beyond 2015* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.12.II.A.3).

supplemented by assistance programmes targeted at groups experiencing extreme poverty and vulnerability. In the absence of universal provision, however, targeted programmes have limited effectiveness, and their effective implementation may pose severe administrative challenges for many developing countries. It is also important to recall that the Millennium Development Goal framework was developed in a context in which social policy played a residual role and did not impinge on the prevailing macroeconomic policies. What has worked, on the one hand, is broad-based, universal social policies and, on the other hand, economic growth and structural change that supports more productive activities and technological upgrading.

51. The implementation of development strategies does not take place in a vacuum. National strategies affect, but are also affected by, the wider global context in which they operate, particularly more so in a world characterized by increasing interdependence. The new development approach should be universal and applicable to all countries. Its focus should be on reforms needed to improve global governance for a more equitable distribution of opportunities among countries and people, a more efficient provision of global public goods and a reduction in the human, environmental and financial risks currently afflicting the international system.

52. The current globalization process tends to accentuate interdependencies among countries, widening the scope of global public goods. A strong relationship exists between global public goods and development agendas: failures in one domain can produce setbacks in the other. For example, the lack of technologies providing basic social services to the poor, clean energy, affordable transport and higher-yielding and drought- and pest-resistant food crop varieties indicates gaps in global public goods that have an important bearing on the ability of national Governments to provide essential services.

53. Among the global public goods with developmental impacts, the most challenging is the threat of climate change. This threat makes it imperative to review existing economic growth patterns and internalize the environmental costs. The characteristics of public goods imply that the market is incapable of ensuring their efficient provisioning and that some form of collective action is required. In the international sphere, the response must be carried out through coordination and voluntary cooperation formulas among the relevant players.

54. Moving forward, the Committee is of the view that international cooperation should deliver more effectively on its three basic objectives: (a) managing the growing interdependence of countries; (b) promoting the reach of social and environmental standards already adopted by the international community (economic, social and cultural rights, associated conventions and access to minimum social services for all); and (c) correcting the large differences that remain in the levels of economic development of countries. In this regard, problems associated with the frameworks regulating international relations (trade, investment, technology, etc.) need to be addressed to ensure that they guarantee a better distribution of development opportunities, including penalizing practices hindering that objective (such as illicit financial flows and fiscal paradises).

C. Challenges ahead

55. This is not an easy task. On the one hand, there is a need for global rules and improved governance to manage global challenges and increase the positive spillover effects while reducing the negative spillover effects (externalities) that some countries can generate in others in an interdependent world. On the other hand, global rules need to be developed in a way that maintains the necessary policy space at the national level, within the limits of interdependence.

56. International regulations or the absence thereof may affect the capacity of national Governments to implement appropriate policies. International trade rules that allow for agricultural export subsidies in rich countries affect the livelihoods of smallholders in developing countries. Similarly, the lack of adequate international financial regulations implies greater volatility in international capital markets, contributing to the occurrence of crises that have negative consequences for the livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable. Some international rules also constrain Government actions to promote productive transformative changes in the economy. At the same time, while compulsory education, minimum wage, access to health care, unemployment insurance and other social standards are defined at the country level, universal standards are required to underpin international regulation and cooperative action if human rights are to be guaranteed at the global level.

57. The complexity of improving global governance, including through the adequate provisioning of global public goods, is further compounded by a few noticeable emerging trends. First, the persistence of global inequalities and rising domestic inequalities has led to a polarization of positions between current "winners" and "losers" and blocks progress in developing a more just and fair system of governance. Despite some progress, inequalities remain pervasive at the global level. According to data from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the average income per capita in developed countries was still more than 55 times higher than the average income per capita in the group of least developed countries in 2010.[9] At the country level, wage shares in national income have been stagnant or declining in most parts of the world and income differentials among different types of workers (particularly between skilled and unskilled) have widened. This trend was reinforced by the adoption of inequitable macroeconomic policies, including the erosion of redistributive elements of national tax and transfer systems. Rising domestic inequalities should be recognized as one of the most adverse trends the world has experienced in recent decades.

58. Second, the level of heterogeneity among developing countries has significantly increased. While a group of countries, mainly located in Asia, has managed to drive successful growth processes that have allowed them to significantly reduce the gap between their income levels and those of the developed countries, another group, the least developed countries, has maintained or increased its income gap with the developed world, and some of them seem to be caught in a poverty trap. A third group, situated between these two extremes, includes countries that have followed very disparate growth paths over the past few decades. A dual divergence seems to have emerged during the period: (a) growing distance between the extremes (least developed countries and high-income countries); and (b) increased heterogeneity among developing countries. As a result of these trends,

[9] UNCTADStat, accessed on 25 March 2013.

a single, shared diagnosis and development path is no longer valid. Moving forward, there is a need to maintain an integral perspective and to work through a differentiated agenda in accordance with the diversity in the conditions of developing countries.

59. Lastly, the bipolar world that characterized the international reality during the cold war is vanishing. Instead, a more complex and multipolar world is emerging. New global powers from the developing world are becoming a significant factor in global politics alongside the traditional powers. These new powers are highly dynamic, with a notable capacity to project their influence. The main growth poles of the global economy are located in developing regions, and this trend is likely to continue in the near future. The increased diffusion of global power opens a window of opportunity for building more inclusive and democratic governance at the international level. At the same time, while there is acceptance of the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities, it is far from clear how a global compact will actually evolve. Lack of progress in this area delays the introduction of much-needed reforms, with serious implications for the further progress and sustainability of development in general.

D. Moving the research programme of the Committee for Development Policy forward

60. The trends described above present new challenges for the international community. Addressing these issues demands an enabling international environment, based on cooperative commitments from both developing and developed countries. The global partnership for development, Millennium Development Goal 8, was the least concrete goal of the international development agenda. In fact, it was poorly defined, incomplete and without clear targets. Without an enabling international environment, many national development efforts will be fruitless. In the Committee's view, there is a pressing need to complement its existing analysis with a consideration of the impact of global rules and global governance on some crucial areas of development. In this connection, the Committee's current research initiative will focus on how to strengthen international cooperation in order to fulfil the three main objectives described above more effectively. A related concern is to avoid neglecting agreed initiatives and compacts and to guarantee effective monitoring, accountability and, in critical areas, the enforcement of international commitments. The results of this initiative will be submitted to the Council in 2014.

Chapter V

Guidelines on reporting requirements for a smooth transition from the least developed country category, and the monitoring of Samoa

A. Introduction

61. In an effort to avoid reversals in the development progress of graduated countries owing to the abrupt disruption of external support, the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/209 on the smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries. In the Istanbul Programme of Action, adopted in May 2011, the Assembly was invited to establish an ad hoc working group to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process. Subsequently, in December 2012, the Assembly adopted its resolution 67/221 on a smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries.

62. In accordance with its resolution 67/221, the General Assembly will take note of the decisions of the Economic and Social Council regarding the graduation of least developed countries, at the first session of the General Assembly following the adoption of such decisions by the Council. This decision is a welcome development and deemed necessary to avoid delays in the graduation process.

63. The aim of the present chapter is to clarify the procedures relating to the reporting exigencies of graduating and graduated countries under the new resolution and how these interact with the monitoring outputs requested by the Committee for Development Policy. The Committee also reviewed the development progress of Samoa, which is scheduled to graduate in January 2014.

B. Reporting requirements for least developed countries identified for graduation by the General Assembly

Reporting by graduating countries

64. In its resolution 67/221, the General Assembly invited Governments of graduating countries, with the support of the consultative mechanism, to report annually to the Committee for Development Policy on the preparation of the transition strategy (see paras. 7 and 20 of the resolution).

65. The reporting by graduating countries concerns the period between the date the recommendation that the country be graduated is taken note of by the General Assembly and the effective graduation date (namely, three years from the date on which the General Assembly takes note).

66. To ensure that the graduating countries' findings on the preparation of their smooth transition strategies are reflected in the Committee's annual monitoring, the Committee recommends that the following timeline be adhered to by the country submitting its report:

> The report by graduating countries is to be received before 31 December of each year prior to the publication of the Committee's annual report to the Economic and Social Council the following year (see the figure following para. 76 below).

67. The Committee recommends that the annual report by graduating countries include the following elements:

(a) A concise summary of the progress achieved in setting up a consultative mechanism that, inter alia, identifies the participants; indicates the meetings convened, their objectives and outcomes; and specifies the substantive and organizational support by the relevant United Nations institutions in convening the meetings, where applicable;

(b) Identification of the least developed countries-specific international support measures that are most relevant to the country and corresponding details about the level of commitments made by development and trading partners in maintaining or phasing out those measures;

(c) Information on the preparation of the transition strategy, including identification of the key issues to be addressed by the strategy, the measures taken, or to be taken, by the country, decisions made and pending actions;

(d) If available, the latest version of the transition strategy should be attached to the report to the Committee.

Reporting by the Committee for Development Policy on graduating countries

68. Since 2008, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions on the Committee's annual report, the Committee has monitored the development progress of graduating countries and includes its findings in its annual report to the Council. These recurring requests from the Council can be avoided by formalizing the monitoring of graduating countries as an integral part of the graduation procedures as follows:

> The Committee for Development Policy will monitor the development progress of graduating countries on an annual basis and include its findings in its annual report to the Council (see figure below).

69. The monitoring report will contain the following elements:

(a) A review of a selected set of indicators and relevant information, established on a country-by-country basis, to assess any signs of deterioration in the development progress of the graduating country;

(b) A summary of the Committee's review of the information provided by the graduating country on the preparation of the transition strategy, if submitted by the graduating country (see para. 66 above).

Reporting by graduated countries

70. Under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 67/221, graduated countries are invited to provide concise annual reports to the Committee on the implementation of the smooth transition strategy for a period of three years, and triennially thereafter, as a complement to the two triennial reviews of the list of least developed countries carried out by the Committee for Development Policy (see para. 20 of the resolution).

71. To ensure that the findings by graduated countries are reflected in the Committee's monitoring report, the Committee recommends that the following timeline be adhered to by the country submitting its report:

The graduated country is invited to submit, for a period of three years, its annual report on the implementation of the smooth transition strategy before 31 December of each year prior to the publication of the Committee's annual report the following year. Thereafter, the graduated country is invited to submit its annual report before 31 December of the year preceding the year in which the Committee undertakes its triennial review of the list of least developed countries, as a complement to the two triennial reviews (see figure below).

72. The Committee recommends that the report by the graduated country include the following elements:

(a) An overview of progress made in implementing the smooth transition strategy and information on whether the measures by the Government of the graduated country and the commitments by its development and trading partners identified in the transition strategy are being fulfilled;

(b) In cases where support is being reduced or withdrawn, the report should indicate how this is affecting the country in order to assist the Committee in its assessment and to bring any negative effects to the attention of the Council as early as possible.

Reporting by the Committee on graduated countries

73. In line with General Assembly resolution 67/221, the development progress of graduated countries will be monitored by the Committee in consultation with the Governments of those countries, on a yearly basis for a period of three years after graduation becomes effective and triennially thereafter, as a complement to two triennial reviews of the list of least developed countries carried out by the Committee (see para. 21 of the resolution).

74. With respect to the monitoring report, the Committee makes the following recommendations (see figure below):

(a) The Committee for Development Policy will continue to monitor the development progress of graduated countries based on the existing guidelines established in 2008;[10]

(b) The main purpose of the monitoring report is to identify any signs of reversal in the development progress of the country concerned during the post-graduation period and to bring them to the attention of the Council as early as possible;

(c) The monitoring will also include an assessment of the inputs from the report by the graduated country if submitted to the Committee (see para. 71 above);

(d) Prior to finalizing its report to the Council, the Committee, through its secretariat, will consult with the New York-based representative of the graduated country about the conclusions of its draft report. The Secretariat will call for a meeting with the representative to discuss the views of the Government not later than 10 working days from the date it sent the draft report. On the assumption that the meeting takes place on or before the specified date, the Government's views will be considered by the Committee in its final report to the Council.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2008, Supplement No. 13* (E/2008/33), chap. IV.

C. Proposed procedures and recommendations to the Economic and Social Council

75. The procedures listed under section B above are intended to clarify the steps needed to enhance the reporting procedures of the smooth transition process. The Committee for Development Policy considers that these procedures are consistent with the framework laid out by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/221 and earlier resolutions relating to smooth transition from the least development category, in particular resolution 59/209.

76. The Committee requests the Economic and Social Council to endorse these procedures as a further clarification to the framework established by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/221.

Smooth transition procedures: reporting by graduating countries, graduated countries and the Committee for Development Policy

Transition period reporting procedures	Three years after General Assembly takes note of recommendation by the Committee for Development Policy	Postgraduation reporting procedures	
Preparation of transition strategy three-year period	Graduation	Implementation of transition strategy	
		Three years	Triennially
Graduating country Invited to report annually to the Committee for Development Policy on the preparation of the transition strategy **Committee for Development Policy** Monitors development progress in its annual reports to the Economic and Social Council	Graduation becomes effective	**Graduated country** Reports annually to the Committee for Development Policy on the implementation of the smooth transition strategy for three years **Committee for Development Policy** Monitors development progress in consultation with graduated country for three years and reports results to the Economic and Social Council	Graduated country Reports to the Committee for Development Policy, as a complement to two triennial reviews, on its implementation of the smooth transition strategy Committee for Development Policy Monitors development progress in consultation with graduated country as a complement to two triennial reviews and reports results to the Economic and Social Council

D. Monitoring of graduating countries

77. In its resolution E/2012/32, the Council requests the Committee for Development Policy to monitor the development progress of countries graduating from the least developed country category. Currently, Samoa is the only least developed country earmarked for graduation by the General Assembly.

78. While Samoa remains highly vulnerable to economic shocks, it continues to make economic and social progress, as findings from the recent trends in the national income and the human assets index suggest. Its gross national income per capita has increased since 2009, as it continues to recover from the negative impact of the global economic crisis and the Pacific Ocean tsunami of 2009. With graduation scheduled to take place on 1 January 2014, the Committee reiterates the importance of the country preparing its smooth transition strategy, in collaboration with its development partners.

Chapter VI
Future work of the Committee for Development Policy

79. The Committee for Development Policy will continue to align its work programme with the needs and priorities established by the Council, with a view to contributing effectively to the Council's deliberations and assisting it in the performance of its functions.

80. For its sixteenth session, the Committee will undertake work on the theme of the 2014 annual ministerial review, "Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future". In this regard, it will analyse how current rules and global governance structures promote effective responses to international problems and a fair distribution of development opportunities among countries. The Committee will also consider the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for monitoring global governance.

81. In preparation of the triennial review of the list of least developed countries, the Committee will review and fine-tune current methodological approaches and criteria used to classify countries as least developed countries. It will also monitor, as applicable, the development progress of graduating and graduated countries as established by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/221 and in accordance with the guidelines recommended in the present report.

82. The Committee will also address the effectiveness of an international support system based on a country classification framework, in view of the increasing heterogeneity of developing countries, the problems of incentives these classifications generate and the persistence of challenges to be addressed.

Chapter VII
Organization of the session

83. The Committee for Development Policy held its fifteenth session at United Nations Headquarters from 18 to 22 March 2013. Twenty-three members of the Committee, as well as observers from several organizations within the United Nations system, attended the session. The list of participants is contained in annex I.

84. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat provided substantive services for the session. The Secretary of the Committee opened the session and welcomed the participants. Subsequently, the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, addressed the Committee. The meeting proceeded with the election of the Bureau as follows: José Antonio Ocampo (Chair), Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (Vice-Chair) and Norman Girvan (Rapporteur). The President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Néstor Osorio, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, also addressed the Committee. Statements are available from http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/cdp_statements.shtml.

85. The agenda for the fifteenth session is contained in annex II.

Annex I

List of participants

1. The following members of the Committee attended the session:

Lu Aiguo

José Antonio Alonso

Nouria Benghabrit-Remaoun

Giovanni Andrea Cornia

Diane Elson

Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (*Vice-Chair*)

Norman Girvan (*Rapporteur*)

Ann Harrison

Stephan Klasen

Keun Lee

Thandika Mkandawire

Adil Najam

Leonce Ndikumana

José Antonio Ocampo (*Chair*)

Tea Petrin

Patrick Plane

Victor Polterovich

Pilar Romaguera

Onalenna Selolwane

Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo

Madhura Swaminathan

Zenebework Tadesse Marcos

Dzodzi Tsikata

2. The following entities of the United Nations system were represented at the session:

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

United Nations Children's Fund

United Nations Development Programme

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

United Nations Environment Programme

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

World Food Programme

World Intellectual Property Organization

Annex II

Agenda

1. Inaugural session.
2. Organizational session.
3. International development agenda beyond 2015: addressing emerging issues in the global environment.
4. Addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of the small island developing States.
5. Least developed country category: selected issues.
6. Science, technology and innovation for achieving sustainable development.
7. The programme of work of the Committee for Development Policy.
8. Adoption of the report of the Committee for Development Policy.

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